1: Fitzgerald H-5 (1937-1938) AE3 Sino-Tibetan
Border Peoples AE3

other hand the third channel of contact, education, is inspired by the ancient Chinese belief that alien peoples can be brought into the Chinese culture by teaching them to use the Chinese script and adopt the moral and ethical principles which Chinese literature expounds. At the present time this well tried method of spreading Chinese civilisation has been revived by including patriotic and political teaching in the curriculum of the schools, with the deliberate intention of welding the varied provinces of China into one nation concious of its unity. The Min Chia lend themselves readily to this process, for, long before the Republic was established, the Imperial Civil Service Examination system had opened a road to wealth and power for all who acquired Chinese learning. The characteristic Chinese respect for education is thus fully shared by the Min Chia.

The schools can be divided broadly into two classes, the city schools maintained by the provincial and local government, and the village schools maintained by the villagers themselves. The first class are subdivided into Elementary and Middle schools, both of which charge fees. Elementary schools in the city are numerous and well attended by both boys and girls, for although education is not actually compulsory every family which can possibly afford it will send their children, especially the boys, to the elementary schools, for which the fees are comparatively low (about 20 Silver dollars a year). The Middle schools of which there are two, one maintained by the city and one by the provincial government, charge 50 Silver dollars a year and continue the education of students up to University age. Only the more wealthy families can afford to educate their children at these schools, which between them have an enrolment of nearly a thousand. Yunnan University, situated at K'un Ming, is open to those who have passed out of the

1: Fitzgerald H-5 (1937-1938) AE3 Sino-Tibetan
Border Peoples AE3

873 Middle Schools, but is beyond the financial reach of most of the population.

872 For most Min Chia farmers the educational system begins and ends in the village school, which is held in the village Ancestral Temple, and maintained by the revenue of the village public lands. In those villages which are wealthy the education given in these schools is often free, or the fee charged practically nominal. The children attend school between the ages of seven and thirteen or fourteen, and the instruction is mainly in the arts of reading and writing Chinese. To these necessary subjects a little simple geography, elementary arithmetic, and Chinese history are added. In recent times even the village schools have been required to teach the outlines of anatomy and physiology as part of the government's effort to improve health and eliminate superstition. The political doctrines of the Nationalist Party, designed to arouse patriotism and national consciousness, are also a compulsory subject.

Approximately 70 per cent of the boys and 30 per cent of the girls in the villages of Ta Li Hsien attend these village schools, for a varying number of years, and most of them carry away enough knowledge of Chinese to read easy text books or simple inscriptions. The practical value of this education is perhaps not very great, but it enables the peasants to keep accounts and protects them from some of the more obvious forms of cheating such as the circulation of worthless coloured paper for bank notes.

876 191 It seems probable that the more modern methods of teaching now coming into use will produce a greater change in the educational standard of the peasantry than the old methods of memorising Chinese classics, which too often left the student with no real understanding of what he had laboriously committed to memory. It is perhaps to these old methods that the Min Chia language owes its survival. When